(b) whether this has affected paddy cultivation in States like Punjab which is experiencing severe labour crunch and is set to bring down the area under paddy cultivation; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to address the problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU): (a) There is no programme by the "NREGA East-West corridor" being implemented by the Ministry. However, Government had enacted National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 in September, 2005. The Act provides for a legal guarantee for 100 days of wage employment to adult members of every rural household in a financial year for doing unskilled manual work on demand. The workers are free to avail any other employment opportunity available to them in their State or elsewhere. NREGA has been extended to the rural areas in the country in a phased manner. 200 districts were covered in the first phase with effect from 2.2.2006. 130 additional districts were covered in the second phase during the year 2007-08 and all the remaining rural areas have been covered under the Act from 1.4.2008.

(b) This Ministry has not received any report from the Government of Punjab regarding paddy cultivation being affected in the State due to labour crunch on account of launch of NREGA.

(c) Does not arise.

Lacunae in the implementation of NREGA

†1054. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the lacunae in the implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Yojana have been pointed out by the Prime Minister and the Chief Justice of India;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether Government has taken administrative steps to improve the implementation of the said scheme after the statements; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU): (a) A seminar on "Interaction on National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme" was organized by National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) on 2nd October, 2008 in which the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India and the Chief Justice of India had addressed the participants. In their respective addresses in the seminar, no lacunae had been pointed out in the implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

---

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.